NOSTALGIA

The difficulty for a housewife in taking in wartime evacuee family

MIKE PETTY AND JAMES MILNER LOOK THROUGH THE CAMBRIDGE NEWS ARCHIVES AT SOME OF THE STORIES FROM THIS DAY IN THE PAST

The Ely Corn Exchange

The demolition of Ely Corn Exchange begins – 1963

DEMOLITION work has begun on the 116 year-old Corn Exchange on Ely's Market Place.

The property, which includes the Exchange Cinema, was purchased some time ago for £20,000 by a London development company which wants to build shops on the site.

Sharing the kitchen stove – 1940

THE housewife looking after evacuees in her home has one of the hardest tasks.

Taking in evacuees means not only giving hospitality to and caring for unaccompanied children; it very often means accepting a mother with her family of young children, an arrangement which calls for an endless spirit of give and take on both sides.

It is easy to say that a woman is lucky to get out of London, but in many cases she has lost her home and her possessions.

She has left behind her husband and other adult relatives. She is in strange surrounding and she may have suffered from shock

Obviously, two sections of the community, the hostess and evacuated mothers, have made tremendous sacrifices and are facing great difficulties. The greatest problem is the sharing of the kitchen stove.

Hence a communal centre where evacuated mothers can spend part of the day and have her midday meal is invaluable.

It is an added benefit if there is a nursery centre for the under-fives and a place where the mother can do her washing and ironing.

Communal feeding and play centres for unaccompanied children are also the first way to ease the burden on the foster mother. People from the bombed areas have been given a great welcome.

Now is the time to consolidate the position by making good arrangements for their welfare and helping them to settle down and become happy and useful members of the community.

The Coveney School will not be converted – 1935

THE managers of Coveney Church of England School are not willing for it to be converted into a junior mixed and infants' school.

But it would be detrimental to the children if they were deprived of the facilities of a senior school and, if parents wanted to send their children to Ely, there was nothing to stop them, councillors heard.

A site for the new senior girls' school in Downham Road could be bought for £1,700 which was less than its commercial value.

The board of education had objected to plans for the new senior school at Chatteris saying it should be a two-storey building or there would not be enough space for physical training and organised games.

Setting in motion oldest engine in the Fens – 1931

STRETHAM beam engine was erected 100 years ago and was recently set in motion by Mr E Stevens after four years of disuse.

The engine is one of the oldest in the Fens.

Although succeeded by a diesel oil engine and Gwynnes centrifugal pump, which disposes more quickly of the water from the Fen, the old beam engine and scoop wheel can still be used to keep the Fen clear of water in case of an emergency.

Manorial rolls a factor in land dispute – 1931

MANORIAL rolls dating back to the 18th century were produced as evidence over a disputed piece of land in High Street, Ramsey.

It was once called Vesey's Yard and had been conveyed with the right of bridle and barrow way to the defendant's land.

He was a potato merchant who stored his empty sacks in the yard, sometimes he put bags of rotten potatoes there.

But neighbours said that although the old cottages, which had been pulled down in 1910, had right-of-way, it had never been used for storage.

Commission lets out Prickwillow toll house – 1920

PRICKWILLOW toll house was let to John William Taylor in connection with the farming of the tolls, as has been the custom for more than 10 years.

The Middle Level Commission had been accustomed to letting the tolls on a three-years lease and the toll house was taken for the use of the collector.

This was last done in 1917 and, this year, they decided to collect the tolls through a stoker whom they employed and required the house for.

They had two large pumping stations and sometimes needed to have both working.

Wartime evacuees arrive in Cambridge